

# BICYCLE LAWS & RIDING TIPS

# **Share the Road**

Cars and bicycles frequently must Share The Road. On roadways with high levels of bicycle traffic, but relatively demanding conditions for bicyclists, Share The Road signs have been installed. These signs are intended to increase motorists'

awareness of bicyclists on a roadway without designating that roadway as a preferred route.

Bicyclists, however, must also be aware of the importance of sharing the road with motorists. If someone comes up behind you, move to the right when safe to allow them to pass. In groups, bicyclists should ride cooperatively and help motorists pass safely.

In North Carolina, your bicycle is a vehicle and you are its driver. You share the rights and the duties with all other drivers as you use the State's roadway network.

Bike = Vehicle



4. Yield the right-of-way whenever you enter the road or when you change lanes or road position. 5. Use a good set of lights and reflectors whenever you ride after dark.

6. Don't ride your bike on sidewalks and treat pedestrians with

## Watch for motorist errors

Drivers often do things that endanger bicyclists, usually without intending to. Knowing what to look for can help you navigate through traffic more safely. Ride predictably and in a visible

take evasive action!

Watch motorists coming towards you who might turn left. Pay particular attention to their road position and, of course, any turn

2 Keep an eye on the motorist coming up on your left who might turn right. Listen for hints that the car might be slowing down.

3 Watch for movement that could indicate a car is coming out



# Ride defensively



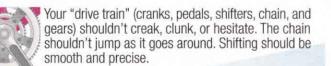
inticipate other people's moves and their likely mistakes. Geep your eyes moving over the traffic scene, use a mirror, and be ready to take evasive action. stablish eye contact with rivers around you to let them know you are there. Shout if

### Use good equipment

You don't need an expensive bike to get around...just one that works and that can be repaired and adjusted.

necessary.

Your brakes should work smoothly and should stop you well even when it's rainy. When you squeeze the lever, it shouldn't "bottom out" against the handlebars. And when you let go of the lever, the brake should come away cleanly from the



To ride at night, you need reliable lights and

reflectors. You need a headlight that lets others see you and that lets you see hazards on the road You need a rear reflector or tail light (both would be a good idea!). The new flashing halogen tail lights are becoming quite popular. It's also a good idea to use pedal reflectors and some people like the wheel reflectors. Being visible at night is essential.

Nothing on your bike should be loose or rattle. To test if it's "road ready," pick it up a few inches off the ground and drop it to see if it makes any noise. Grease and oil in the right spots to keep your bike running smoothly and to reduce wear and tear.

n short, keep your bike in good condition!

# Basic traffic riding techniques

others where you're going.

out of right turn lanes.

if there is one, use the left turn lane.

**Making left turns** 

streets and work up to busier ones.

intersection where you want

whether you can move left across the lane before they

2 If you can cross before they arrive, signal and merge across into a left turn

position near the center line

If you can't cross before they

arrive, signal and watch the

over, move left and wave

3 Once you've merged to a left turn position, ride straight and watch what's going on

As you approach your

around you.

second nature.

"thanks." If the driver doesn't slow, let the car pass and try again with the next

approaching driver. If he or she slows and waves you

or in a left turn lane.

to turn left, look back. If someone is coming, decide

Making left turns is tricky but can be learned. Start on quiet

**Destination and position** 

Near intersections, it's a good idea to let your road position tell

To turn right, move towards the right edge of the roadway.

2 To go straight, keep at least three feet from the curb and stay

3 To turn left, ride about three feet right of the center line or,

Riding confidently and skillfully in traffic takes practice and an understanding of some basic ideas. One of the most important ideas is *road position*. Just where you ride on the roadway depends on several important things: your speed, the width and

## Speed and road position

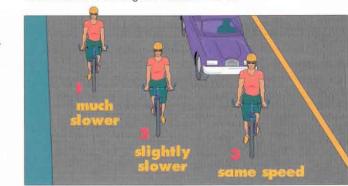
The closer you go to the speed of traffic, the closer you should ride to that traffic.

condition of the road, and your destination.

1 When everyone else is going a lot faster than you, keep well

2 When they're going a little faster, ride near traffic. This encourages right-turners to slow and wait instead of passing at the last moment and cutting you off.

3 When they're going the same speed as you, ride in the line of traffic. This is your most visible position and ensures you'll be where drivers look for traffic. There's no reason to ride fast near the curb and a lot of good reasons not to.



# Width and road position

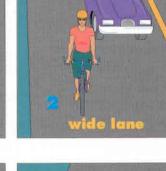
1 On a road with very narrow lanes, ride far enough from the edge to discourage dangerously close passing. Many expert riders ride in the car's right wheel track.

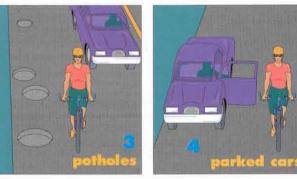
2 On a road with wide traffic lanes, ride just to the right of the traffic stream. This allows easy passing but reduces the danger caused by turning or crossing traffic.

3 On a road with gravel, debris, or potholes on the right side, ride on the smooth pavement to the left of them.

Always ride a good door's width from parked cars.







**Bike handling** 

Having good control of your bike makes traffic riding easier and

safer. Practice until you can look around, shift gears, use the brakes, avoid potholes, and stand up on the pedals without

Scanning and signaling

Looking back over your shoulder tells you what's

going on back there. Do it occasionally, just to avoid surprises. And do it before you make any kind of move (like merging left to turn).

Practice in an empty parking lot until you

can do it without swerving. Try easing

your grip on the handlebars or dropping

the hand of the shoulder you're looking

Stopping your bike

In an emergency stop, slide back

on the saddle and get low. Gradually

squeeze harder on the front brake

but let off a bit if the rear wheel

diverting your attention from traffic.





### Left turns on fast roads

On busy high-speed roads, it's very difficult to negotiate your way across traffic. In this case, it's a good idea to make your turn like a pedestrian and walk across when safe.

# **Wear a helmet!**

If you don't already have one, get a bicycle helmet today! If you have one, wear it every time you ride. Today's helmets look good, are very light, and let in those cooling breezes...all while protecting your head and brain! Helmets cost as little as \$10 and could be your most important piece of equipment.

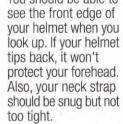
In a word: protection. A good bike helmet can protect your brain. That's important if your head hits a hard surface... like a road, a curb, or a car. Brains are fragile and once damaged may not mend.



### What Get one that fits snugly but is not tight. Make sure it has ASTM, ANSI, or SNEL stickers, which prove that it's

passed the tests.

You should be able to



Make sure your helmet is the right size and



doesn't rock from side to side. You can add interior pads to fine

Acknowledgments: Published by the North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. Cartography and design by Bob Perrier, CGM Services, PO Box 7673, Missoula, MT 59807 (bobp@montana.com), Safety Graphics by John Williams, Tracy-Williams Consulting PO Box 8311, Missoula, MT 59807 (www.bikeplan.com), and used by permission by NCDOT. Sources: The area in and around High Point based on the digital version of the City of High Point map. Surrounding areas based on the digital versions of the NCDOT county maps. Supplemental and reference material include the City of High Point Street Name Map, the Thomasville official street map,

graphs, 1:24,000 SDTS, and 1:24,000 printed map series. Colophon: Map prepared on an Apple Macintosh PowerPC computer with Macromedia FreeHand and Avenza MAPublisher software. Additional software includes Adobe Acrobat, Illustrator, and Photoshop, ESRI ArcView, and ClarisWorks. Imagesetting by Imperial Color, Sparks, Nevada. Printed by Advanced

US Census Bureau TIGER line files, NCDOT printed county maps, and the USGS 1:100,000 digital line